Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

During the recent German printers' strike the authorities of Dresden and Munich ordered soldier printers to work in the offices left by the strikers. Perhaps this new use of the army will arouse the workmen's opposition to militarism.

A fool of a preacher having denounced the drama as in league with damnation, a Boston paper ventures to remark that the drama will survive as long as the churches. Is that encouraging for the drama? Lovers of the drama hope to see the churches transformed into theatres.

Capt. Fairbank, an Englishman, is spending an enforced term at Galloupe's island for having refused to be vaccinated. He is a member of the English anti-vaccination league, and does not propose to be poisoned by American legal quacks; but men with ideas of their own on the subject of vaccination cannot come into this free country.

"The country today is really not in so much danger from its tramps as it is from the cautious, astute men who are worth a million or more, who never break a lock, and who never steal less than $500,000 at a time." These are the words, not of a rabid radical, but of Bishop Huntington, of central New York. The speech from which this sentiment is culled bristled with sharp and pointed comments upon the prevailing condition of things.

The New York "Sun" reports that a Syracuse cobbler has brought suit for $2500 against a newspaper for falsely calling him a Christian. In the writ served upon the defendant it is declared that the plaintiff has not only lost patronage, but that the alleged libel "has caused the said John Brooks to be brought into scandal, infamy, and disgrace with and among his neighbors to the extent of causing it to be suspected and believed by the said neighbors and citizens that the plaintiff had been guilty of the offences herein mentioned, to wit, of being a Christian." Enlightened as Syracuse seems to be, the cobbler will lose his suit. To be a Christian is to be guilty, not of crime, but of imbecility.

As the children of today, says the Boston "Herald," are to be the men and women of the next generation, and as the future good government of the State is dependent both upon their intellectual and moral training, the State has the right to insist that those who are hereafter to have its destiny in their charge shall be prepared for their responsibilities. In the first place, it is not for the servant to direct the education of the master. Those who have the State's destiny in their charge are of course the masters of the State; how can the State govern its masters? Then, is the State something that can insist or feel? If the State has a right to claim anything, we are ready to listen to its case. Let it walk fearlessly into court and defend its rights. We are all anxious to see and get acquainted with it.

Some readers may still remember F. Q. Stuart's allegation that the Anarchists "understand and recognize only one-half of the law of equal freedom — which is equivalent to, and perhaps worse than, no knowledge of it whatever." They may also remember that, when asked to substantiate this charge, he timorously and foolishly replied that the Anarchists exhibited their ignorance of the law of equal liberty by contenting themselves with the first half of the Spencerian formula, — with the words, "every person has a natural right to do as he wills," eliminating the last half, — "provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other person." Liberty's re-rejoinder then was as follows: "True. The Anarchists similarly eliminate the last half of the following statement: Three times four are twelve, provided four times three are not thirteen. Does the word *every* mean anything to Mr. Stuart?" I do not know whether or not Mr. Stuart still holds to his original discovery of the distinction between the Anarchists, who recognize and understand only one-half of the law of equal freedom, and the Individualists, who, by carefully adding the last half of the formula, show a perfect understanding of the law. At any rate, I commend to him and to the readers the interesting remarks (reprinted elsewhere) on the formula, from an editorial in "Today." It is plain that either the editor of "Today" has discarded one-half of the law of liberty and has been unphilosophical enough to become an Anarchist, or else that Stuart's distinction is repudiated by Individualists and that his understanding of the law of equal liberty is decidedly imperfect.

There is a Chinaman in New York who reports the news of the Chinese quarter in the local newspapers. He is a citizen, a man of some education, and wields an able pen. But he has made it part of his work to expose the opium joints and fan-tan dives, and has thus forced the police to exert themselves and enforce the laws. The police, it is needless to say, are not friendly to him, as the closing of the resorts cuts down their income. Recently a false charge was made against him, and he was tried and acquitted by the jury. After his acquittal, he said: "I cannot describe the amount of persecution that I have experienced at the hands of the police of that precinct, because I have dared to expose the opium joints and gambling dives in that precinct. When young Capt. McCullagh was in command he sent for me to the Elizabeth street station one day and said to me angrily and threateningly: 'You have got to drop this business or we'll fix you. You've got to get out of this precinct altogether, or I will put you where you won't be peddling news to the newspapers.' I complained to Inspector Williams about it, and he said that he would see that I was treated properly, but I never saw any improvement." A reporter degrades himself by becoming a spy and amateur agent of the law, and I never wish such reporters success in their detective work. But this incident serves to show the true character of our police. They are paid handsomely for enforcing the law; and they are quite ready to do their "dooty," provided the law breakers are not willing to come to terms with them. The real criminals are always eager to have their protection, and the men who are unjustly meddled with by the law generally find it advantageous to bribe them; to those who do not bribe them they are indeed a terror. Witness the workmen's troubles in New York and Chicago.

A Startling Admission.

[Chicago Herald.]

Inasmuch as the Supreme Court of the United States declined to go into the ["Chicago Anarchists'"] case on its legal merits and it has never, therefore, received final comment judicially, private persons may surely have opinions on the matter; and it is even true, as history attests, that what seems to one period and one generation sound law another period, a later generation, revises.

Lilliputian Government.

[Gen. Trumbull in Open Court.]

There are cynical moralists, mostly aged men, who find a stimulating pleasure in contrasting the physical greatness of a nation with its political smallness. They laugh ironically when the great American republic in its wealth condescends to statesmanship too small for the little Swiss republic in its poverty. They indulge in the sneer sinister when they see Americans, complacent and contented, submitting to petty tyrannies which other peoples not so free would not endure at all. Hamlet gravely contemplated suicide when he thought about "the insolence of office, and the spurns which patient merit of the unworthy takes"; but the Americans endure all that, not only without contemplating suicide, but at last with a sort of inverted national pride. We acquire a relish for it after long suffering, as people do for olives. We get laws made at higher prices than other people pay, and then we allow them to be construed, interpreted, modified, expanded, and contracted by an expensive bureaucracy, until the administration of them becomes a complicated and uncertain system of Government by the Departments; the Hon. Secretary, and the Hon. Commissioner, with deputies by the hundred, twisting the laws out of all shape and symmetry to fit the necessities of special cases, or to gratify the whims of the hour; and every eccentricity of government by the Departments is called "a new construction of the law." A fantastic specimen of this irritating style of government was exhibited a few days ago. A book, worth a dollar and a quarter, was sent by a gentleman in England to his friend in Chicago. At the post office it was promptly "seized" for non-payment of duty, and the owner was duly notified. He went to the Custom House and was told that he must not only pay the tariff, but also a fine equal to the full price of the book. "Why," he said, "you never extorted that before." "No," said the officer in a tone of mournful reprobation, "but this is a new construction of the law. However, as this is your first offence, we will not exact the penalty this time. Pay the tariff, take your book, and don't do it again." "But," said the victim of this new construction, "I haven't done anything." "Well," replied the officer, "don't do it again."

Hercules looking for a butterfly that he may knock its brains out with his club, will fairly represent the United States of America looking for a baby's night cap in the mails to devour it as contraband of trade. I know a baby, an American baby too, who received from his grandmother in Europe a present in a letter which immediately became "suspect." This letter was arrested by the Post Office Department, and committed for trial to the Custom House Department, on the felonious charge of containing something liable to a tariff tax. The baby's father was notified in proper official jargon to appear and open the letter in the presence of the authorities duly commissioned and appointed to try suspected letters. He went up to the department, the "suspect" was produced, and the judges sat upon it solemn as a coroner's jury. The letter was opened, and the felonious contraband within it was dragged from its lurking place. It proved to be a jacket for a little boy baby; and it was knit for him by his grandmother across the sea. The guilty jacket was ordered for instant execution, but the baby's father, on payment of the fine assessed against it, was allowed to rescue the jacket and take it home to the baby. That same lady, still unlearned in the laws of the United States, sent also a pair of silk stockings in a letter, and these went through the same ordeal as the baby jacket, but they were saved from confiscation by the opportune payment of a tribute amounting to one dollar and a half, the fine duly assessed by the jury that sat upon the stockings. I am told by persons who have studied political economy that in this case "the foreigner paid the tax"; if so, I think it was very diminutive statesmanship that required her to pay it. And even if the American baby paid it, or his father, it would still be a Cheap John stroke of business very well adapted to the pygmy government of Lilliput.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

☞ A NEW BOOK GIVEN AWAY WITH EACH RENEWAL. — Payment of subscriptions and of renewals is required in advance. The names of subscribers not heard from within two weeks after expiration of subscription are removed from the list. But to every subscriber who sends his renewal for one year, accompanied by the cash, so that it reaches the publisher not later than two weeks after it is due, will be sent, postpaid, any book published in the United States that the subscriber may select, provided that its retail price does not exceed 50 cents if published by Benj. R. Tucker, or 25 cents if published by any other publisher. This is a permanent offer, and enables every promptly-paying subscriber to get a new book each year free of cost. But only one book will be given at a time, no matter how low the price of the book selected.

Good Out of Evil.

Some time ago the New York "Evening Post," in the course of an article denunciatory of the tariff and other paternalistic features of our government, remarked parenthetically that it could not assent to the proposition that money-issuing and banking belonged among the legitimate functions of government. Individualists did not know whether the startling announcement of the "Post's" inmost conviction called for manifestations of joy or for manifestations of grief. On the one hand, there was the substance of the announcement, which certainly justified enthusiasm, and, on the other, there was the form of it, which greatly discounted the substance. It is undoubtedly encouraging and inspiriting to know that such a powerful organ as the "Post" is so intelligently and consistently individualistic as to favor free trade in capital; but how saddening is the reflection that a great paper feels constrained to taboo so vital an issue and to convey its ideas in a brief and parenthetical remark the significance of which must escape most of its readers. Of course it is not to be supposed that the "Post" fails to appreciate the real importance of the subject; yet, instead of making it prominent or even giving it a tithe of the consideration it deserves, it studiously avoids it.

Still, if the "Post" is not very brave and independent, it is at least cunning and wise. If it cannot openly and frankly advocate free banking, it can indirectly expose the government's dark purpose and so state the facts as to make it impossible for the reader to miss the moral. It can, and has done so, and it merits our gratitude. The occasion and the method were as follows.

The "Post" professes to regard the crusade against the Louisiana lottery a righteous one, and it exhorts the citizens of New York and of other States to work for the overthrow of that "gambling institution." But after all it has but little faith in the success of its moral crusade, and naturally turns to Congress for more effectual means than those at the command of private citizens. Congress, to be sure, has already passed a law prohibiting the circulation of lottery matter in the mails, but the "Post," while duly thankful for this, points out that the "pest" is not to be killed by such means and that the time has come to apply a more searching power still in reserve. "We refer," says the "Post," "to the taxing power." What follows is so interesting and suggestive that I give it in full:

It will not be contended that lottery tickets are more sacred than the notes of State banks, or those of towns, cities, and municipal corporations. Yet Congress put a tax of 10 per cent. on all those things a quarter of a century ago, and has kept it in force ever since. This tax was levied in order to put those things out of existence — to kill them off. Revenue was not a consideration. If the object had been to collect money for the use of the government, the tax would have been put at a rate low enough to let these notes and the issuing institutions live. But the object was to make an end of them entirely, and it was believed that a tax as high as 10 per cent. was needed for the purpose. So that figure was adopted, and has been enforced with the greatest rigor. There have been several cases where the scrip of municipal corporations has been pounced upon by the officers of the government, and in every case where it was made clear that such scrip was used as a local circulating medium, whether designed so to be or not, the tax has been enforced and the offending paper driven out of existence.

The laws to which reference is here made are sections 3412–15, inclusive, Revised Statutes. We quote two of these sections:

Sec. 3412. Every national banking association, State bank, or State banking association, shall pay a tax of 10 per centum on the amount of notes of any person, or of any State bank or State banking association used for circulation and paid out by them.

Sec. 3413. Every national banking association, State bank, or banker, or association, shall pay a tax of 10 per centum on the amount of notes of any town, city, or municipal corporation paid out by them.

The remaining sections provide that the tax shall be collected by the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, and that, in case he cannot obtain correct returns of the amount of notes liable to the tax, he shall make an estimate and collect the amount on such estimate, and that the person or institution neglecting or refusing to make returns shall be fined $200 *in addition* to the penalties and forfeitures applicable to ordinary neglect or refusal.

With the "Post's" inference from this precedent I am not concerned. But I refuse to believe that it cited it with no other object in view than the avowed one, and am disposed to credit it with the intention of scoring a point against the present financial system under the thin veil of suggesting a way to cripple the lottery. The "Post" was willing to appear to be engaged in evil for the sake of accomplishing some good indirectly. I may be wrong; but, if so, I prefer to err on the side of generosity. V. Y.

Plumb-Line Pointers.

It turns out that the wild-eyed men who were arrested as Anarchists in Chicago the other day were simply drunk. The police are to be excused, however. The symptoms are similar. — *Boston Herald.*

The daily newspaper paragraphers mistake this sort of stuff for wit. In fact, it is heartless and brainless flippancy. Chicago youths who play at reporting for the press might be excused for confounding the symptoms of Anarchism and drunkenness, taking into account the wild utterances often heard from the so-called Anarchistic platform there, but there is no such excuse possible for Boston journalists. Boston is the home of philosophic Anarchism, and a paper of the alleged independence and the ability and influence of the "Herald" should be above the petty meanness of printing such a thing as the one quoted above, wholly misleading as it is, and as the "Herald" must know it to be.

"Jeffersonian" Democrats should be proud of Ex-Mayor Abram S. Hewitt of New York. In a mass meeting recently held in that city to express sympathy with the anti-Lottery movement in Louisiana Mr. Hewitt made "the speech of the evening." Here is a choice sample of his logic:

Suppose that a body of men should come to our State today, and ask us to grant them a charter allowing them to rob the railroad trains of the country. Suppose they should offer us, as an inducement, to divide their plunder with us — offer to pay our taxes with a percentage of their gains. That is precisely what the people of Louisiana are asked to do today.

Mr. Hewitt knows, if he knows anything, that that is *not* what the people of Louisiana are asked to do. Without a charter the Lottery Company can have no legal existence or rights. So decrees the monopolistic State. Their charter is about to expire. Naturally, they wish to have it renewed. There exists much opposition thereto. To assist in overcoming this opposition the Company offers to make certain payments to the State. It agrees to divide the "plunder," if you will have it so. If there is bribery and other corruption in this, the parent monopolist, the State, is wholly responsible therefor. This Company, says Mr. Hewitt inferentially, stands upon the same ground, in equity and ethics, as would a train-robbing association. Is this true? Manifestly it is not true. Every person of common sense (this is not intended as a reflection upon the intelligence of Mr. Hewitt) knows that a lottery company and a gang of train robbers cannot fairly be compared as Mr. Hewitt compares them. No matter how fraudulent a lottery scheme may be, no man is defrauded thereby who does not voluntarily take his chances, both as to the drawing being fair and as to his number being the lucky one. Neither the State nor the Company nor any more powerful individual *compels* him to buy a ticket. He takes his own risks. But what victim of the train robber *willingly* takes any risk? What is there in his relations to the robber which is analogous to his relations to the lottery company? Does he buy a ticket of the robber, said ticket giving him one chance out of ten or a hundred or a thousand of drawing the prize of immunity from spoliation? But this is a waste of space, for no reasoning person could be deceived by Hewitt's sophistry.

The waters surrounding Ireland abound in fish. They have ever been the most productive waters of Europe, and for centuries have been the envy of every maritime nation of Europe. In the old days fortunes were made, not only by Irishmen, but by fishermen of other nations, who paid large sums for the privilege of taking fish off the Irish coast. Blundering legislation by English Parliaments, idiotic restrictions placed upon those engaged in this pursuit, and crazy enactments by commissioners who knew nothing of what they were supposed to govern, ruined the industry, until today the Irish fishermen, few in number, are starving, when they might be living in plenty. Scotland, England, Wales, and even the Isle of Man have more boats engaged in Irish waters than has Ireland herself. — *Boston Republic.*

The above should need no comment. It speaks more forcibly than could any words of mine of the blighting effects of government upon the industries and prosperity of men.

Harold Frederic, in answer to the expressions of incredulity from our State department touching the sympathy of our diplomatic and consular representatives at St. Petersburg with the persecution of the Hebrews there, offers to furnish satisfactory proofs if the State department is anxious to get at the facts. Mr. Frederic reiterates his assertion that, up to September last, our representatives sided with the Russian Jew-baiters, and used their position to inspire statements in the public press about the unhappy Hebrews that were as unfounded as they were cruel. Perhaps Mr. Blaine might advantageously look into this. — *Boston Herald.*

But it is quite probable that our State department is *not* "anxious to get at the facts," at least, not for publication. The persistency with which this and preceding administrations have sided with the Russian government against the Russian people inclines one to believe that there *is* "honor among thieves." The unblushing friendship of the United States government for the Czardom is shameful beyond description.

Among the many articles called out by the death of Charles Stewart Parnell I have seen nothing better than Morrison L. Swift's contribution to the "Golden Rule" of Cincinnati. Here are the closing paragraphs.

The world has poorly appreciated him, nor is there promise that for some generations it will comprehend the mainspring of his character. He is now well out of the way, a victim of human ingratitude and stupidity. "Even politics repeats the old lesson," exults the so-called religious press, "that there is some wisdom in the fear of the Lord. We are not sorry to see it again shown that crimes against the family are not forgiven by the English race, and that it is now settled that an immoral personal life ruins any man who seeks the suffrage of an Anglo-Saxon people."

I am sorry to find myself opposed to so powerful, popular, and profitable an institution as the religious press, but when I read of the terrors in store for those who commit crimes against the sacred family, I query to myself who will avenge the yet more sacred individual for crimes done against him

by the family. The individual is more than the family. Strong men like Mr. Parnell show what the future has in store; that affinities will govern, not extraneous conventional ties. The family is not so wonderful an institution. It is a half-way house to something better. I anticipate that it will fall into comparative disuse among the highly cultured before very long.

And it will be for the political and "religious" worlds lamentable if they reject the service of those who first outgrow the necessity for this shaking go-cart. Mr. Parnell, I doubt not, could very well have dispensed with the political arena of Ireland, but where would Ireland have been without him?

Recent utterances of many orthodox clergymen point to the conclusion that Socialism in this country will soon have but one prefix — "Christian." The Communism of early Christianity, ignored or denied by most ministers until very lately, is more and more frequently acknowledged by spokesmen of the Church as the years pass, and it has already become quite fashionable to claim a substantial identity for the teachings of Christianity and the principles of modern State Socialism. In its issue of Nov. 22 the Socialistic "People" of New York gives some extracts from the addresses of three ministers before the Christian Church Congress in Washington. I reproduce below the more significant portions of those extracts:

Rev. Bartlett, Montchanin, Del. — Socialism can be the only outcome of Democracy. . . . . We are already far along on the road to Socialism, and we should not attempt to put it off, nor yet should it cause us any dread or fear. The government control of education, of the army and the navy, of the post-office, the policing of the cities, the paving of streets, and numerous other matters over which the government asserts control, are all proofs of the growth of a form of Socialism. A person who will today protest against Socialism finds himself objecting to a system that has been tried and found to be successful beyond all expectation. The old theory that the best government is the least government is a preposterous idea.

Rev. Sprague, Charlestown, Mass. — Socialism substitutes for the idea of profit and gain the idea of service. Socialism substitutes the idea of mankind as one great family for the idea that is now current. From Christianity we have reached the conception of the human family as members all of one body, but our present social system cannot be said to come up to that conception. The chief opponent of Socialism is Herbert Spencer, who strangely objects to it on the ground that it substitutes for the great individual struggle of the race for existence the conception of the brotherhood of man. The fundamentals of Socialism are the ideals of Christianity, and Socialism is the most practicable system for human life and government.

Rev. William Prall, Detroit. — Socialism is the remedy for the ills of the time. Its aim is justice. This is also the aim of Christianity, and Socialism is in harmony with the teachings of him who said that as ye would have men do unto you do ye also unto them. . . . . Socialism may be hostile to the Church, but it is not hostile to Christians.

These excerpts are not introduced here for the purpose of criticising the statements and arguments therein, but simply that I may pointedly call the attention of those Freethinkers and Secularists who are more or less imbued with Socialistic notions to the probability that, Socialism triumphing through the assistance of churchmen, State and Church will be fused into one grand politico-ecclesiastical machine which will as surely, effectually, and relentlessly cut to pieces religious dissentients as it will industrial and financial independents. When Rev. Bartlett declares that "The old theory that the best government is the least government is a preposterous idea," he in effect and logically places himself on record as being in favor of State control of religion. If it be true, as he avers, that Jefferson and Paine were mistaken, — that the people need much more government instead of less, — what becomes of Protestantism and Freethought? If men holding such opinions as he expresses are to constitute the dominating factor in the coming Socialistic State what place or peace will there be for those who can no longer accept the teachings of theology? What say T. B. Wakeman, C. P. Somerby, W. F. Jamieson, Moses Hull? The issue of the age is more government or less; State Socialism or Individualism; mob rule or personal initiative. Which is the way of equal liberty, of wisdom and safety? Is he a clear-seeing and consistent Freethinker who hesitates for one instant in his choosing of answer and direction of march?

The treasury department at Washington has again distinguished itself as the guardian of public morals, and Rochegrosse's painting of "The Fall of Babylon," which was exhibited at the Paris Salon this year, and which has been forwarded to this country for exhibition, will not be permitted to land here. The idea of the customs officers is that, while the picture may be unobjectionable from the Parisian point of view, it is too vivid for this country, and, accordingly, they are going to rely on the law which makes the penalty for importing objectionable works of art a fine of $5,000, or imprisonment for ten years at hard labor, or both. That is the way the tariff protects our morals. — *Boston Herald.*

The "Herald" does not very much admire the tariff, since it is ready to make a point against it whenever possible, which is satisfactory, of course, as far as it goes. But does the "Herald" not think that the United States postal statute under which Postmaster Tobey of this city once refused to allow the transmission of "Leaves of Grass" through the mails "protects our morals" in a manner fully as irritating as can any tariff regulation? Or, is it possible for said postal statute to be enforced by the customs officials in a manner more obnoxiously invasive than that in which it is administered by the local postmasters, the Postmaster Generals, the McAffees and Comstocks?

Anarchy belongs distinctively to no foreign race, to no European country, or Asiatic country, or African country. It is a flag without a race, without a country. What the black flag has been on the seas the red flag is on land. The red flag cannot be suffered to wave in American streets any more than the black flag on the thoroughfares of the sea. Anarchy, that so calls itself, is impotent. It need arouse no fear. Know-Nothingism that vaunts itself in the American flag, which it defiles, is a little more potent, but it is despicable and is as un-American as Anarchy, which it closely resembles.

While every nationality that enters into the American race has distinctive music as a race, Anarchy has no music, which is consistent with its avowed character. Know-Nothingism has no music and no flag, except when it steals either or both. — *Chicago Herald.*

If Anarchy, "that so calls itself," is "impotent," why go to the trouble of forbidding the display of its flag? What harm can its flaunting do? But, on the other hand, as "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," may not wise reactionists (if there are any) justly be apprehensive that the proscription of this symbol will give to the faction which it represents a dangerous and destructive even if only a temporary strength? But the "Herald" says that "what the black flag has been on the seas the red flag is on the land." The black flag on the seas has been far from impotent; it has aroused much fear, and with good cause. How, then, can the "Herald" aver that the red flag is what the black flag has been, when in the same paragraph it declares that the red flag is impotent and need excite no fear? But the climax of journalistic absurdity is reached when the "Herald" asseverates that Anarchy "closely resembles" Know-Nothingism. Will the "Herald" kindly particularize the features in which it traces the asserted close resemblance between either revolutionary Socialism (commonly miscalled Anarchism) or scientific Anarchism, on the one hand, and Know-Nothingism, on the other? As to the music of Anarchy, I respectfully suggest to the "Herald" that it send to the publisher of Liberty for a copy of J. Wm. Lloyd's "Anarchists' March."

E. C. WALKER.

My Title.

The London "Personal Rights Journal" declares that "it is very encouraging to note how the younger political thinkers of the Anarchistic camp in the United States are divesting themselves of the crudities of Anarchism and settling down to Individualism" as the "Journal" understands it. I find that my name is on the "Journal's" roll of honor, and infer that something I have said or done has been construed into a relinquishment of certain alleged crudities of Anarchism. It is true that I have been and am trying to divest myself of all manner of crudities, but I am not aware that I have abandoned any essential or distinctive Anarchistic doctrine. To believe that the right to incorporeal property is a logical deduction from the law of equal freedom is not to antagonize Anarchism, though such an opinion is at variance with the views of most Anarchists. Anarchism signifies faithful adherence to equal liberty, and those who do not deliberately or knowingly lend countenance to anything inconsistent with equal liberty are entitled to the appellation of Anarchists. Whether the right to incorporeal property *does* follow from, or *is* a corollary of, the law of equal freedom, is a question upon which opinions differ and cannot be made a test of fidelity to Anarchism. Nor is the acceptance of the so-called egoistic philosophy, which I have discarded and to which the "Journal" possibly alludes in speaking of the crudities of Anarchism, such a test. The egoistic philosophy has simply nothing to do with the principle of equal liberty. He who adopts that principle is an Anarchist, whatever his reasons or grounds. He may be a disciple of Spencer or a disciple of Jesus; he may be a believer in God (as Spooner was) or an "infidel," as I am. I have not settled down to Individualism as the "Journal" understands it, for I disbelieve in compulsory taxation and land-nationalization. Indeed, I might say that the most philosophical Individualists are divesting themselves of the crudities of *bourgeois* Individualism and settling down to Anarchism as I understand it. No philosophical Individualist now believes in government. Some readily admit that compulsory taxation is indefensible from the view-point of absolute political ethics, while others decline to discuss the question. The fact that most Individualists deem it unwise and inexpedient to make voluntary taxation an issue at present is irrelevant and unimportant. Besides, most Anarchists are in accord with them in this matter, and consider free banking, free trade, free mails, and similar planks of the programme infinitely more important as practical and promising issues.

"Egoism," among other impudent and gratuitously abusive remarks, has seen fit to charge me with doing Individualist work in the Anarchist ranks. Self-respect forbids my noticing its comments; but I may, perhaps, suggest that its charge is refuted in the above explanation. V. Y.

The Law and the Formula.

[Today.]

Spencer constantly expresses the law of justice as the liberty of each limited only by the like liberty of all, or by saying, Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man. Repeatedly and emphatically as the philosopher has explained the genesis of the idea expressed by this formula, it is nevertheless constantly misunderstood. I mean grossly and absurdly misunderstood. Some persons still cudgel their brains over the qualifying phrase, *limited only by the like liberty of all*, and over the phrase, *provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man.* And I know that more than one has asked himself (in vain), why limited by the *like* liberty? Why guard the *equal* freedom of all? What is the origin and defence of this limitation? The case has been explained a thousand times; but as persons who miss one explanation sometimes take up with another, I will put the law a little differently.

The qualifying phrases are mere amplifications. They do not add anything to the main affirmation — to the assertion of positive freedom; they require no separate justification; they do not introduce a consideration, — they merely emphasize a consideration already expressed. *Like liberty of all; equal freedom of another;* these are only parenthetical remarks serving to emphasize one element in the original proposition, — *Freedom.* The perfect and complete law of justice is already contained in the proposition, Every man is free to do that which he wills. The idea is absolutely complete; and though a thousand tomes, and in each volume a thousand pages, and on every page a thousand words, should be written, not an *i* could be dotted or a *t* crossed that should add to that idea. Freedom, — the beginning and the end of Justice. Because the freedom asserted is that of *every* man; a freedom which can exist only by coexisting with the limitation emphasized (but not originally introduced) by the phrase, Like freedom of others. If one man has more freedom than that which coexists with the freedom of others, then those others have less freedom, and the original demand that *every* man shall have freedom is unsatisfied. The limiting phrase, *provided he infringes not the equal freedom of another*, must be put in parenthesis, thus: Every man is free to do that which he wills (provided he lets others do the same), referring the reader to the main statement for the justification of the limitation. Then will people please stop fumbling their noses with crossed fingers to find another nose which simply is not there?

Real Appreciation of Mackay's Book.

[New York Morning Journal.]

John Henry Mackay has been called "the first poet of Anarchy." A false title. Every poet is an Anarchist; the world of self has but one inhabitant, who is first and last, and for whom there exists no other worlds. Individualism is egotism. The song is the child of the singer, not his father.

Happy is he who can afford a creed! In a world where bread is the end for which men struggle an idea is valueless, unless it concern bread; and of those who have inherited a right to rest from this struggle, but a very few can turn their backs and forget that more bread may be won in the fight.

Mackay is one of the fortunates; he is young; he has enough money to provide for his wants; he may champion an idea without losing his dinner. Of such as he is Anarchy

made today. It is only the rich who can negative government; the poor must bow to it.

Not yet twenty-eight years old, Mackay has published eleven volumes of verse and prose. A bread-winner could not have done this. Few men have made so good use of opportunity. The aristocrat is sometimes the highest revolutionist; poverty wears chains and cannot rebel.

The eleventh of these volumes is "Die Anarchisten," now afforded in an English translation by George Schumm. It is a book such as a centenarian might have written, had he eyes to see.

Plainly, Mackay has discovered the true philosopher's stone; he transmutes time into thought.

"The Anarchists" is one of the very few books that have a right to live. This is a judgment on its literary value, not its sociological purpose; the latter may not be weighed here. For insight into life and manners, for dramatic strength, for incisiveness of phrase, and for cold, pitiless logic, no book of this generation equals it. It is a "novel with a purpose"—oh, the dreariness of that name!—and yet it interests. Could greater praise be given it?

It has no plot, as the word is understood in fiction; perhaps because it is not fiction. It is a view of society, as society is at the end of the nineteenth century; a view taken, bit by bit, by Carrard Auban, who had been a Socialist in France when the upholding of the principles represented by that title meant imprisonment. Auban was young; therefore he was a dreamer. The law forbids men to dream of certain things, and punishes those who disobey. Auban went to prison, where his voice could do no harm to the fabric of government. During his first day within a cell he dashed himself against the stone walls and cried out for freedom; in a month he blessed the police for his incarceration; solitude had taught him to think.

Government was still to him a wrong; but Socialism was also a wrong, a greater wrong, for it was a greater government. Where, then, should he place himself? Time must answer that; society must teach him how society was to be attacked.

He went to London.

In the short intervals between the hours that he devoted to bread-getting he walked the city from end to end; the marvellous city that is an epitome of the world; the city where five million human beings snarl, and struggle, and bite each other, like dogs in a pit; the city where wealth is a magnificent dream and poverty an agonizing nightmare; the city which every year sends millions of dollars to blacks who suffer from want of salvation, while within its circle whites suffer from want of food; the city of glory and greed, of palaces and pestilences; the civilized city of London.

What Auban saw made him know his course. He could find but one remedy for these evils: Anarchy.

So the story leaves him. It is the beginning of his real life. The end? That lies in the future. Anarchy has not yet been accepted, either in London or New York.

The rich are too busy.

The poor are, also, too busy.

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